

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated January 13, 2004 having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on April 13, 2004. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

In the specification, the new paragraphs [0012.1] through [0012.4] were added after paragraph [0012] to provide a brief description of the new Figures 4-7. New paragraph [0016.1] was added after paragraph [0016] to describe new Figure 4. The paragraphs 0017, 0019 and 0020 have been amended to support new Figures 5-7.

The drawings have been amended. Figure 1 was amended to remove reference to "105". Figures 4-7 were added to address the Examiner's objection to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a). In preparing the new figures, Applicant was careful not to introduce any new matter. The new figures are entirely supported by the original specification, and show only those features included in the original specification. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner's rejection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1-20 remain pending following entry of this response. Claims 1, 3-4, 6-7, 9-13, 16, 18 and 20 have been amended. Applicants submit that the amendments do not introduce new matter.

Claims 6-7, 16, and 20 are objected to because of an informality. Applicant has made appropriate corrections.

Claims 4, 9 (and dependent claims 10-17), and 18 (and dependent claims 19-20) stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. The Examiner states that it is unclear what is meant by "a parameter representative of". Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection and submits that a person skilled in the art of databases and/or network technologies will understand what is meant by "a parameter representative of" a web site or an online merchant. In fact, the phrase is self-describing. A "parameter" is defined as "a characteristic element". (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1984 Merriam-Webster Inc.) "Representative" is defined as "serving to represent" or "serving as a typical or characteristic example". (*Id.*) A person skilled in the art would recognize that "a parameter representative of a web site (or online merchant)" may be,

for example, a web site or merchant name, or a URL. However, to avoid any definitional ambiguity, Applicant has amended the claims.

The Examiner invites the Applicant to comment on the meaning of claim terms to the extent that special meaning is attached thereto. The Examiner further states that "[f]ailure to address this issue or to be non-responsive to this issue entirely will be considered a desire by Applicant to forgo lexicography in this application and to continue having the claims interpreted with their ordinary and accustomed (*sic*) meaning and with their broadest reasonable interpretation." (Page 5 of Examiner's Action.) Respectfully, Applicant is aware of no legal requirement on the part of the Applicant to preemptively commit to specific term definitions during prosecution. It is presumed that the Examiner will give the claim terms their broadest reasonable interpretation to ensure proper examination. Of course, specific definitional issues that arise with respect to particular cited references during prosecution will be addressed by the Applicant as necessary.

Claims 1, 4, 6, 9-10, 15, 17, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by *Solokl, et al.* (6,173,269 B1; *Solokl*). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Solokl teaches a method and apparatus provided for executing electronic transactions with teens, especially where such transactions are limited only to those vendors that have been approved by the teen's parents. (See, Abstract.) The reference states that:

"An important feature of the invention is the ability of the parent to accept a service approved list of appropriate merchants, appropriate merchant categories, or to specify a parent approved merchant profile....This aspect of the invention allows a parent to control those items to which a teen has access...The service can inspect a merchant site before it is added to the service's approved list and thereby prevent teen access to undesirable sites or specific products/services on otherwise approved sites." (Column 4, lines 60-67 and column 6, lines 1-6; emphasis added.)

Accordingly, *Solokl* does not teach, show or suggest a method for determining whether an online purchase is prohibited (as claimed), but whether the purchase is allowed on

the basis of a predetermined list of allowed merchants. As a result of this distinction, the implementation of disclosed in *Solokl* is different than what is claimed in the present application. Specifically, because the "approved list" of *Solokl* is user-specific, a separate list is required for each user. A generic database is not taught or suggested by *Solokl*, as recited, for example, in claim 18. Further, because no such generic database is taught, *Solokl* does not teach, show or suggest prohibiting an online purchase request on the basis of a search of the database and application of user preferences on the basis of any search results from the database as is claimed, for example, in claim 1 and claim 9. In *Solokl* if a given merchant to whom a purchase request is directed is not on the approved list, the purchase request is rejected. Reference to any user preferences is not needed and, in fact, is illogical since the request is rejected on the basis of the approved list alone. In contrast, since the claimed merchant database need not be user-specific, the database is first searched to determine whether the database contains an entry corresponding to a specific purchase request. The presence of a corresponding entry in the database is not enough to determine that the purchase request is prohibited. Rather, if such an entry is found in the database, the user preferences are then applied to determine whether the identified corresponding entry represents a prohibited merchant (i.e., a merchant providing prohibited goods or services).

Claims 4, 9-10, 12, 15 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Solokl* in view of *Chaudhuri, et al.* (6,223,171 B1). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. *Solokl* has been described above. Because the rejection based on *Solokl* is believed to have been overcome, it follows that any rejection based on the combination of *Solokl* (applied in the same way) with another reference is also believed to be overcome. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

Claims 2, 7, 16, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Solokl, et al.* Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. *Solokl* has been described above, and is believed to have been overcome. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

Claims 3, 11, 13, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Solokl, et al.* as applied to claims 1, 9, and 20 above, and further in view of *Li* (2002/0099700 A1) and/or *McCallum, et al.* Building Domain-Specific Search Engines with Machine Learning Techniques, AAAI Spring Symposium on Artificial Intelligence Agents in Cyberspace 1999, 1999. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. *Solokl* has been described above. Because the rejection based on *Solokl* is believed to have been overcome, it follows that any rejection based on the combination of *Solokl* (applied in the same way) with another reference is also believed to be overcome. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

Claims 5 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Solokl, et al.* as applied to claims 1 and 9 above, and further in view of *Leading Online Gateway for Teen Shopping Ensures Privacy, Safety and Security, PR newswire*, June 28, 1999, pg. 1. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. *Solokl* has been described above. Because the rejection based on *Solokl* is believed to have been overcome, it follows that any rejection based on the combination of *Solokl* (applied in the same way) with another reference is also believed to be overcome. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

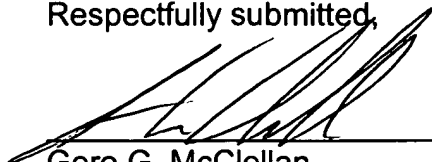
Claims 6, 8, 15, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Solokl, et al.* as applied to claims 1, 9, and 18 above, and further in view of *Leading Online Gateway for Teen Shopping Ensures Privacy, Safety and Security, PR newswire*, June 28, 1999, pg. 1. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. *Solokl* has been described above. Because the rejection based on *Solokl* is believed to have been overcome, it follows that any rejection based on the combination of *Solokl* (applied in the same way) with another reference is also believed to be overcome. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

The secondary references made of record are noted. However, it is believed that the secondary references are no more pertinent to the Applicant's disclosure than the primary references cited in the office action. Therefore, Applicant believes that a

detailed discussion of the secondary references is not necessary for a full and complete response to this office action.

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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